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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W AND AF/RSA  
PARIS FOR AF WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SNAR PGOV SOCI NG

SUBJECT: NIGER: INCINERATION OF SEIZED NARCOTICS AT  
COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST  
NARCOTICS ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING

¶1. On June 26, 2008, to commemorate the 21st International Day in the Fight against Narcotics Abuse and Trafficking, Government of Niger (GON) Minister of Justice Dagra Mamadou presided over a ceremony to incinerate narcotics seized in Niger over the period November 2006 - October 2007. Several GON Cabinet Ministers (Defense, Health, Environment & the Fight Against Desertification, Women's Promotion & Children's Protection, Youth & Sports), the diplomatic corps, nongovernmental organization representatives and local residents attended the ceremony that received wide media coverage.

¶2. In brief remarks Dagra reported that GON national seizures of narcotics for the 12-month period totaled:  
-- 6831 kilograms of cannabis resin  
-- 847,570 kilograms of cannabis leaves  
-- 34,456 kilograms of cocaine  
-- 388,193 tablets made from diverse psychotropic substances.

¶3. The ceremony was delayed about 35 minutes waiting for the truck (under military escort) to arrive from Agadez (in northern Niger) with what Dagra reported in his remarks to be 5707 kilograms of cannabis for incineration at the Niamey commemoration ceremony. An unspecified number (appeared to be tens of thousands) of counterfeit Central Bank of West Africa franc (CFA) notes were also burned with the cannabis at the ceremony.

ALLEN